

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Title:

In deference to the Examiner's wishes as expressed in the Office Action dated December 18, 2007, please replace the Title of the Invention as follows:

~~SYSTEM AND METHODS FOR INFERRING INFORMATIONAL GOALS AND~~
~~PREFERRED LEVEL OF DETAIL OF ANSWERS~~ BASED ON APPLICATION BEING
EMPLOYED BY THE USER

Abstract:

Please amend the abstract of the disclosure as follows:

A system and method for inferring informational goals and preferred level of details in answers in response to questions posed to computer-based information retrieval or question-answering systems is provided. The system includes a query subsystem that can receive an input query and extrinsic data associated with the query and which can output an answer to the query[.]] ~~and/or rephrased queries or sample queries.~~ The query subsystem accesses an inference model to retrieve conditional probabilities that certain informational goals are present. One application of the system includes determining a user's likely informational goals and then accessing a knowledge data store to retrieve responsive information. Determining a user's likely informational goals can include inferring a desired level of detail of answers to the query based on the application being employed by the user at the time the query is submitted. The system includes a natural language processor that parses queries into observable linguistic features and embedded semantic components that can be employed to retrieve the conditional probabilities from the inference model. The inference model is built by employing supervised learning and statistical analysis on a set of queries suitable to be presented to a question-answering system. Such a set of queries can be manipulated to produce different inference models based on demographic and/or localized linguistic data.

In the Specification:

Please replace the first paragraph on page 1 of the specification with the following amended paragraph:

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

This application is related to co-pending Continuation-in-Part U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 10/185,150, filed June 28, 2002, entitled, "SYSTEM AND METHODS FOR INFERRING INFORMATIONAL GOALS AND PREFERRED LEVEL OF DETAIL OF RESULTS IN RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS POSED TO AN AUTOMATED INFORMATION-RETRIEVAL OR QUESTION-ANSWERING SERVICE", and co-pending divisional U.S. Patent Application Serial No. [[____]] 11/047,491 (Atty. Docket No. MS164185.03/MSFTP215USB), filed on [[____]] January 31, 2005, entitled, "SYSTEM AND METHODS FOR INFERRING INFORMATIONAL GOALS AND PREFERRED LEVEL OF DETAIL OF ANSWERS."